



Proclamation

WHEREAS, Each year, our Nation sets aside a week to honor 25 million Americans whose entrepreneurial drive personifies the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, America's 25 million small businesses reflect on things that make our nation great: vision responsibility, innovation, dedication and hard work. It is often small entrepreneurs who are inventors, risk takers, and job creators; and

WHEREAS, small businesses are a vital part of our nation's economy, and they are leading the way during the current economic recovery. They represent 99 percent of employers. More than half of all private- sector employees work at small businesses. Three out of every four new jobs created in this country are created by small businesses; and

WHEREAS, as our nation continues on the path of economic recovery, it is important to appreciate the role that our small entrepreneurs are playing. Government does not create jobs. Businesses do. Although the government can help to liberate the energies of our small business owners, it is entrepreneurs who are growing our economy. Their efforts are vital to the creation of new jobs for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, despite their successes, it is appropriate during Small Businesses Week to examine the challenges still faced by America's entrepreneurs; and

WHEREAS, those include rising health care costs disproportionately affect small businesses and their employees. Health Savings Accounts, created as part of last year's Medicare Reform Act, can help small business owners and employees with health care cost, and owners whose employees use HSAs can save as much as 40 percent in health care costs. But that will not be enough. Small businesses deserve the same purchasing and bargaining power that large corporations have; and

WHEREAS, Small Business Week is a time to celebrate our successes, and thank America's small business owners for their contributions to our communities, our economy, and our nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, Governor of the state of Louisiana, do hereby proclaim May 16-22, 2004, as

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

in the state of Louisiana, I encourage all residents to observe Small Business Week appropriately, to dedicate themselves to learning more about America's entrepreneurs and how we can help them continue on the irrtremendous path of success.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set
my hand officially and caused to be affixed the
Great Seal of the State of Louisiana, at the
Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this
the 25th day of May
A.D., 2004.*

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor of Louisiana



*Attest By
The Governor*

Joseph M. Keithen
Secretary of State